1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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According to the April 1957 official records, 86 ninety Hsin Hsing

311 village farm families cultivated 61.74 *chia* (147.6 acres) of arable land
423 as owners and/or tenants.[13] Of this total, 16.29 *chia* (38.9 acres) were
427 still held by thirty-eight families as tenant land. The average amount of arable land cultivated per household was 0.68 *chia* (1.6 acres).[14]

Because of the limited amount of land available, most villagers who want to buy or rent land for cultivation cannot be too particular [493] about its location. They are usually willing to acquire any piece of land, so long as it is in the general area and can be conveniently reached by bicycle. Thus a villager's land usually consists of several tiny plots scattered throughout the surrounding countryside. On the average, the size of the separate plot is well under 0.3 *chia* (0.7 acres), which means that villagers must spend much of their time shuttling back and forth among their scattered small fields. If the fieldwork [492] demands only a few light tools, the trip by bicycle is fast enough, but if [407] it requires a water buffalo and heavy equipment like a plow, the trip from field to field takes a great deal of time. However, having the plots scattered this way can also be an advantage: all the land cultivated by [312] one villager is not necessarily dependent upon the same irrigation ditch or even perhaps the same irrigation network. Thus a shortage of water in one waterway need not effect all of a farmer's holdings.

311 Many of the fields cultivated by Hsin Hsing villagers are almost two
423 miles away, on the far side of the two neighboring villages Ta Yu and
427 Yung P'ing. For example, in the Yung P'ing area where Hsin Hsing
628 villagers rent or own much land, the fields are cultivated by farmers from at least three different villages. One field may be adjoined on three sides by fields owned or held by farmers from Ta Yu, Yung P'ing, or Hsin Hsing. This, of course, means these villagers will have some relationship with each other, especially if the fields are irrigated. (See Land Tenure Map, Chapter 4, for details.) The proximity of fields held by men from different villages is especially common in the area around Hsin Hsing, since the villages here are so close together that there is not very much open land between them. There are also a number of Hsin Hsing-owned wet fields beyond the two-mile range of the village, which are therefore not shown on the land map. In fact, a few villagers cultivate relatively large plots of dry land almost six miles from the village, since these crops do not usually need constant attention. In these cases the land is either tenant land still owned by public enterprises or is formerly land publicly or privately owned sold to the tenant under the Land Reform Acts of 1951–1952. The Hsin Hsing villagers originally rented these lands after the last war, when the competition for land was at its height.

423 These fragmented and scattered landholdings result from several
428 factors. The insufficiency of land caused villagers to buy or rent land
[427] wherever it was available. In addition, the system of inheritance of

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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grown depends mainly on the type of soil in the field. In the Hsin Hsing village area, most of the farmers grow the native *tsai lai* rice because it best withstands the weather, disease, and insects.

Within each major type of rice there are also sub-types, each of which has a slightly different growing season. A farmer may plant different types or sub-types in different plots, so that he will not have to plant and harvest all his rice fields at the same time.

The entire rice-growing operation is performed by hand labor. The farmer germinates his best rice from an earlier crop and then broadcasts it in a small, muddy, well-fertilized seedbed. While the seedlings grow—a period of thirty to fifty days for the first crop and fifteen to twenty days for the second—the paddy field is prepared for the transfer of the seedlings. The field is prepared in several operations; a water buffalo draws a wooden plow with a steel blade of adjustable depth and two different kinds of harrows. The preparation of one *chia* (= 2.39 acres) of land takes about seven days for one water buffalo and one laborer. Since many villagers do not own a buffalo (and even a landlord usually does not own one since he would not do his own heavy work), the animal and its owner—usually a fellow villager—must be hired to do the fieldwork. In 1958, the cost of hiring a water buffalo and a laborer was about NT $60–70 per day.

After the rice paddy is flooded the seedlings are removed from the seedbed by hand and transferred in rows by a small group of hired specialists. Such a man can transplant about 0.15 *chia* (0.36 acres) of land in one day. In 1958 he was paid over NT $20 a day, and at night he was given a large dinner, wine, and cigarettes. In the Hsin Hsing area this is considered a fairly high wage for a day's work. On the day the rice seedlings are transplanted, the wives of many farmers go to the village Earth God Temple to worship and pray for a good crop. Such food as whole fish, meat, and fowl are sacrificed and later served to the laborers.

Three times during the growing season the rice paddies are allowed to become relatively dry, to make weeding possible. This is done by the farmer's family or by hired village women who receive about NT $6 per day and no food. Also, during the growing period (about eighty-five to one hundred days after transplanting for the first crop, but a shorter time for the second), the fields are fertilized twice and sprayed with insecticide if necessary.

Rice harvesting is done by men and women in groups of ten; they are either hired or exchange labor. Usually a group of all men is preferred. Such a group can harvest an average of a little over 0.5 *chia* (1.2 acres) per day. The amount of land harvested depends upon the distance of the field from the house, and thus the distance the rice must be carried after threshing.